

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 280 024

CS 210 312

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TITLE English Education of Learning Disabled Students.
PUB DATE 19 Jan 87
NOTE 48p.
PUB TYPE Information Analyses (070) -- Guides - Classroom Use
- Guides (For Teachers) (052)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adolescent Development; Curriculum Development;
English Curriculum; *English Instruction; High
Schools; *Learning Disabilities; Learning Problems;
*Mainstreaming; Program Administration; *Program
Descriptions; *Study Skills; Teaching Methods;
Writing Instruction

ABSTRACT

Focusing on English instruction for mainstreamed learning disabled (LD) high school students, this paper surveys and interprets the literature on the subject, examines specific teaching methods and student study skills that have worked in this area, and reviews the English program proposed by Daniel Fader. Specifically, sections discuss the following: (1) the success of one high school mainstreaming program in Iowa; (2) differing views on the feasibility of mainstreaming for mentally retarded students; (3) the book "Learning Disabilities: The Struggle from Adolescence toward Adulthood" by W. M. Cruickshank, W. C. Morse, and J. S. Johns; (4) the use of the mastery approach to English instruction for mainstreamed LD adolescents in public high schools; (5) the book "The Learning Disabled Adolescent: Program Alternatives in the Secondary School" by G. Marsh, and C. and B. Gearheart; (6) specific suggestions concerning curriculum modification, accommodatory teaching techniques, and particular study skills for LD adolescents; (7) recommended study skills, particularly the SQ3R technique (survey, question, read, reflect, and reread); (8) the contracting systems for maximizing motivation proposed by C. and B. Gearheart and G. Marsh; (9) the problems that LD students experience in the classroom, as they were addressed by W. M. Cruickshank, and others; (10) an article by J. Johnson and M. Newman on journal writing; (11) the books "Teaching the Learning Disabled Adolescent: Strategies and Methods" by G. Alley and D. Deshler and "Plans and the Structure of Behavior" by G. Miller, E. Galanter, and K. Pigram; and (12) the development and administration of Donald Fader's "English in Every Classroom" program. (JD)

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ENGLISH EDUCATION
OF
LEARNING DISABLED STUDENTS

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Jan. 19, 1987

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The public school instruction of learning disabled students has long been a controversial and contentious subject, and always a very changeful field. It was as recently as 1963 that Samuel D. Kirk, at a national meeting of the Association for Children with Learning Disabilities (ACLD), proposed that the term "learning disabled" be applied to a certain broad grouping of students possessing one or more of a group of "specific learning disabilities." The ACLD,--an organization of parents concerned about the education of their learning disabled children, has been instrumental in affecting societal attitudes, school policies, and most notably and dramatically national policies concerning the education of these students. The last formally accepted definition of learning disabilities was that adopted by the federal government in Dec., 1977, for the purpose of providing guidelines for the funding of programs initiated under PL 94-142(1975):

'Specific learning disability' means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual handicaps, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia and developmental aphasia. The term does not include children who have learning problems which are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor handicaps, or mental retardation, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage. (Berdine and Blackhurst, An Introduction to Special Education, p.392)

This definition clearly points out the language-difficulty character of the various forms of "specific learning disability,"--as well as indicating some of the commonly used labels or "disability categories" that do and do not fall under the heading of "specific learning disabilities." The 1975 law states as well,--as the landmark legislation it is in the field of special needs students' education, that "all students with special needs must be educated, to the greatest extent possible, in the 'least restrictive environment'" (my own paraphrasing). This means, practically speaking,--for the less severely learning disabled students, that as far as possible these students must be educated in the "normal", regular classroom setting. Consequently the term

"mainstreaming" has come about, mainstreaming being the integration of special needs students from special needs classes into the "main stream" of educational life, into regular classes as far as possible.

Mainstreaming has acquired considerable support from educational institutions in past years, while remaining a subject of strong educational controversy. In all cases, however, the "mainstreaming movement" has acquired considerable momentum,--and is, in fact(as stated above) mandated by law. Chances are very good, and over a number of years it is a virtual certainty, that the "regular" classroom teacher will encounter mainstreamed students in his or her classes. How shall the "regular" teacher deal with this situation? What teaching methodologies and student study skills work best for the teacher and for the mainstreamed students in such classes? What has been done at the secondary level in such mainstreamed educational encounters? What has worked successfully?

This paper is concerned with the subject matter of English, with the teaching of mainstreamed learning disabled students at the high school level, in the regular classrooms. After a survey of the literature in the field of this subject, and an examination of what has already been done in the teaching of English in mainstreamed classrooms, I will examine more particularly the specific teaching methodologies and student study skills that have worked in this area,--closing with a close look at the proposed English instructional program of Daniel Fader. This last is my own recommendation for the prospective teacher of English in mainstreamed, regular classrooms. I am contending here that there are particular teaching methodologies and program developments which are more helpful to mainstreamed special needs students,--while being at the same time beneficial to all the students of the mainstreamed class. These methodologies and program developments are more helpful for the acquisition of the basic and more advanced reading, writing, thinking and spelling skills. I will examine these methodologies and aids,--with particular attention to notetaking, listening skills, reading strategies, and the self-monitoring and correcting of writing errors, in the

light of the several kinds of disability and disability-combinations that may occur with special needs students.

A PROGRAM THAT WORKS

In a special program set up in Bettendorf, Iowa in the local high school to study a possible integration process of mainstreaming students with special needs into "regular" English classes, many positive results were obtained in terms of student acquisition of basic skills and in terms of student achievement. In their article "Teaming Up to Mainstream in English: A Successful Secondary Program"(1981), Laurence Sargent, Theresa Swartzbaugh and Patricia Sherman state that "some aspects of secondary programming have been more amenable to the integration process than others. The walls between special education and regular education first began to break down in the areas of career and vocational education. To date, the professional literature of integrating handicapped students has emphasized the career education area. Attempts to integrate students into all academic areas did not always succeed until schools built support systems"(Sargent, Swartzbaugh and Sherman, p.100). This is a good summary of the "programs to date", in the integration of special and regular educational programs. The authors state that "to date, the professional literature...has emphasized the career education area;" the need now, however,--at least as far as the mildly learning disabled students are concerned, is to increase the levels of integration in the academic areas. The authors further assert that "the English class presents one of the greatest challenges to special educators in their efforts to mainstream handicapped students. English, more than any other subject, emphasizes skills that mildly handicapped pupils are least able to perform [my own underlining]" (Sargent, et al., p.100). I think that this is largely true,--with the added note that mathematics classes and the acquisition of the basic mathematical skills(the computational skills and the senses of time, space, direction and sequence) are also very important development areas for particular varieties of learning disabilities. The skills developed in the English classes,--

particularly the basic reading and writing skills, are crucial and vital to the students' successful performance and survival in school, and also later in the larger society. Although this last statement may appear at first to be obvious, it is important to note that many learning disabled students, and to some extent perhaps all learning disabled students, are able to conceal or perhaps to otherwise compensate for their learning difficulties before their reaching the more rigorous academic demands of high school.

The program developed at Bettendorf High School is called "Practical English." This is a series of courses taught by teams of special and regular educators, wherein "the teachers attempted to blend instruction that meets the practical needs of handicapped pupils within the regular English curriculum"(Sargent et al., p.101). The emphasis here is on the practical needs of the handicapped pupils, addressed within the usual "regular" English curriculum. Skill development through attention to practical needs and realistic situations is an accepted teaching methodology for the instruction of disabled students. The authors describe a typical ninth-grade class as consisting of fourteen nonhandicapped pupils and fourteen learning disabled pupils; the "teaching team" consists of the regular English teacher, the reading specialist,--who is in the classroom two days per week, and the special education teacher, who is involved every day and in all aspects of the instruction. The minimal performance level for entry into the program for any student is a third-grade reading level and a perceived ability to benefit from the class experiences. The non-handicapped students possessed reading and writing skills two or more years below grade level. The authors point out that "in most instances, these pupils exhibit social and classroom behaviors that are appropriate for their age and grade level"(Sargent et al., p.101). In other words, no exceedingly difficult behavioral cases were accepted into the experimental program. The goals of "Practical English" are "to provide instruction in reading, writing, listening, and speaking that will provide practical language skills to students whose interest and previous achievement indicated a need for instruction in these areas"(Sargent, Swartzbaugh and

Sherman, p.101). Additionally, the teachers of the program intended to provide handicapped students with stronger peer models and an environment more competitive than the special classes from which they came.

Within the class itself the students are formed into groups based on "function" and "need"; importantly, these groups are not constructed on the basis of ability or handicap. The instruction, planned in large part by the reading teacher, varies from word attack to the abstract comprehension skills. This is important also, for the more abstract comprehending and thinking skills should be taught to all the students during most of their instructional years. Many skills are taught in small groups, such as word attack, vocabulary, sequences, interpretation, critical thinking, content area reading, and "survival reading." Survival reading,--which the authors describe as "critical" for the handicapped students, includes "the reading of labels, job applications, maps and charts, catalogs, and directions on credit applications"(Sargent et al., p.101-2). The authors also note interestingly that the students need "encouragement",--in the sense of developing "pleasure reading habits"; for this purpose they include in their classroom activities "motivational junior novels and high interest/low vocabulary short stories"(Sargent et al., p.102).

Concerning writing instruction, Sargent, Swartzbaugh and Sherman describe their format as consisting of "teaching grammatical structure in the context of applying these skills in both practical situations and traditional language arts activities;" the text used in the course, English Made Easier(Ballafiore, 1974), is well supplemented with various teacher-made materials(Sargent et al., p.102). The authors point out that "these writing activities and regular dictation exercises serve to pattern[my own underlining] the students' writing. While these procedures may not enhance creativity, they do provide students with functional competencies that they do not acquire spontaneously"(Sargent et al., p.102). Such patterning activity is crucial for learning disabled students, whose various disabilities and disability-combinations (such as deficiencies in visual or auditory discrimination, "information retention"(memory), or "memory-retrieval") may seriously

inhibit their picking up and retaining certain writing forms and exercises. Such drill and patterning exercises by the learning disabled students enhance their retention of the basic skills.

Whereas "survival reading" is discussed above, the authors also point out particular "practical writing exercises" included in their program. These encompass "memos to an employer, letters of request, complaint letters, personal letters, telephone messages, descriptive essays, and notetaking for other classes (Sargent et al., p.102). Such writing exercises have obvious personal and practical value,--which helps in the stimulation of the students' motivation in these activities. Also, as it is of value for the students to be provided with as much practice in writing as possible, this writing practice is best performed in forms and for ends of obvious practical benefit for the students,--in forms in which the students will be directly practicing processes to be used in later life. One of the prime precepts of learning disabilities training is to train and practice in forms and methods which will have direct later application. The assignments of the program are a combination of "literature-related" and "practical application."

The instruction of the "Practical English" program follows closely the requirements of the regular English curriculum and meets the needs of the handicapped students. There are "situational writing assignments",--which illustrate "how English skills are relevant to their daily lives." Strong components of the program also include each student's use of the journal, and film and story reviews. Spelling, "a writing skill that is problematic to the handicapped and nonhandicapped alike," is dealt with mainly through "backward chaining exercises",--in which students complete the spelling of successively less complete words. Instruction and practice in speaking is also provided, covering "the conventional methods of conversational and public speaking," and in which "the emphasis...is directed at meaningful speaking activities" (Sargent et al., p.102). Once again, relevant and meaningful activities are emphasized, for the instruction of skills. As mentioned above, these activities and this practice is of particular value for learning disabled students.

Concerning unruly behavior, the authors point out that, "as

many experienced teachers know, a class of low performing students at the secondary level can turn into a management nightmare;" this, they maintain, largely results from low motivation, frustration, and "learning deficiencies"(Sargent et al., p.102). The key concept employed in the program for such behavior management is "that success in school work motivates students to work more and behave better"(Sargent et al., p.102). Consequently, the teachers of the program make use of frequent tests,--composed primarily of questions requiring "concrete level responses", instruction individualized and "directed at the functioning level of the students"(practices considerably aided by the team-teaching process), and a "cost-response system" in which a certain accumulation of negative points results in some "punishment",--or otherwise appropriate consequence.

In assessing the efficacy of their program, the aforesaid authors state that "the bottom line for all instructional programs is improvement in student behavior and measured learning;" they assert that "several handicapped students have demonstrated as many as two years growth in skill areas in a single year,"--and the authors describe the improved behavior patterns of many of the students as resulting in their being subsequently referred to other mainstreamed classes(Sargent et al., p.102). Sargent, Swartzbaugh and Sherman further assert that "one of the most encouraging results is that these gains were made without forfeiting those aspects of a special education program that emphasize the development of practical skills"(Sargent et al., p.102). As previously mentioned, the foregoing is a prime element of special education and remedial programs. In conclusion, the authors point out that "the class content remains within the context of the regular English program, but relevant materials and special teaching techniques are employed to enhance the learning of these low performing and reluctant learners"(Sargent et al., p.103). The team-teaching technique brings varied expertise and methodology to the nonhandicapped students, while the goals for the handicapped students are being met. And finally, as the authors themselves assert, "in the more competitive environment of the mixed classes, the learning disabled and mentally handicapped youth achieve and

behave more like their nonhandicapped peers. Although competitive, the classroom environment is designed with a support system and content that is not punishing to the handicapped student" (Sargent et al., p.103). In the "Practical English" program, the special needs of the handicapped students are met,--while they are at the same time presented with the challenging, "competitive" program of the regular English curriculum. The handicapped students as well enjoy the more positive behavioral models of their peers. "Practical English" does indeed appear to have been a success, for the handicapped students involved.

A DIFFERING POINT OF VIEW

As one of the references for their article, Sargent, Swartzbaugh and Sherman give the article "Mainstreaming for the Secondary Educable Mentally Retarded: Is It Defensible?" (G.M. Clark, 1975). The suggestion contained within this title is that while mainstreaming may work for many students with special educational needs, it may not be practicable for all,--and in particular not for the more severely disabled. For these students special education classrooms, remedial situations with some regular classroom experience, or even participation in "special education schools" may well constitute the "least restrictive environment" situation. Also, there has been much criticism of the "mainstreaming movement", as is illustrated by H.M. Walker in his article "Social Behavior Survival: Preparing Handicapped Children for the Realities of Mainstream Classrooms" (1982).

Concerning the difficulties involved with mainstreaming, Mr. Walker maintains in his article that "there can be little doubt about the merits of mainstreaming as a general educational strategy and as a goal for special education programming. However, there are massive logistical barriers that impinge upon the task of making effective mainstreaming a reality for the majority of handicapped children..." (Walker, p.40). Not disagreeing with the idea of mainstreaming as "a goal for special education programming", Mr. Walker maintains that there are practical difficulties which "impinge" upon its efficacy for "the majority of handicapped

children." These difficulties include the following:

(a) the technical competence required of regular educators in order to accommodate the special needs of handicapped children; (b) the provision of sufficient diversity, specialization, and individualization of educational programming to accommodate the needs of handicapped children within the context of the regular classroom; (c) the task of persuading regular educators that a mainstreamed handicapped child is their responsibility and that many handicapped children will require and are entitled to [my own underlining] the investment of extraordinary amounts of time, energy and specialized assistance just to achieve what is for them a normal rate of progress; and (d) the task of expanding the tolerance levels or limits of regular teachers for forms of child social behavior they are not used to seeing and/or are not willing to accept. (Walker, p.40)

Mr. Walker raises some important points, including some points addressed in the preceding account of the "Practical English" program. I would like to here emphasize "(c)" as a particularly difficult barrier to mainstreaming,--the task of re-educating "regular educators" as to their responsibility in the education of the mainstreamed child and as to the legal (and moral) rights of learning disabled children for a "full" and "complete" education. Mr. Walker himself maintains that (a) and (b) are easier to overcome than (c) and (d): "Barriers (c) and (d), involving attitudes, expectancies, and standards taught to regular educators in university training programs and reinforced by long established school practices, will likely prove highly intractable" (Walker, p.40).

In the "Practical English" program most of the difficulties listed above by H.M. Walker were compensated for by the tri-part team-teaching technique,--as well as by the awareness of and sensitivity to the special educational needs of the low achieving handicapped and nonhandicapped children evidenced by the members of "Practical English" teaching team. Although the obstacles to mainstreaming are substantial, they are not insurmountable. Sargent, Swartzbaugh and Sherman maintain that their program "should serve as a model to encourage other secondary schools to attempt integration of [the] handicapped into language arts classes" (Sargent et al., p.103). "Practical English" is indeed one model for such an integration.

THE LEARNING DISABLED ADOLESCENT

Cruikshank, Morse and Johns have written a very interesting and informative book, Learning Disabilities: The Struggle from Adolescence toward Adulthood(1980), in which they discuss a specific clinical elementary educative program directed toward the remediation of and compensation for the specific learning disabilities of a number of children. Cruickshank was involved in this program during the years 1962-1967. The authors trace the subsequent development over the years of several individuals involved in this "educative experiment", and in a general overview format they discuss the meaning of being learning disabled for an adolescent or young adult today. In the first chapter, "The Enormity of it All", a teenage youth being interviewed by the authors in his home proclaims "'Oh wow! The enormity of it all! Why me, and not some other guys?'"(Cruickshank et al., p.3). Cruickshank, Morse and Johns add that "the complexity and enormity of the problem is not so easy for young people to understand; it is confusing also to a vast number of adults and professional people"(Cruickshank et al., p.3). For a young person in the learning disabled condition, his/her situation does indeed appear "enormous"; in addition to the academic aspects of the condition, it encompasses personal and social dimensions. The authors stress the complexity of the term "learning disabilities",--pointing out that the various specific disabilities do take many different forms, and do often exist in various combinations. These disabilities arise from either "environmentally produced problems"(e.g. family economic and/or cultural deprivation, individuals' askew social perceptions) or from "bio-physically produced problems",--such as inherent central nervous system or perceptual disorders. Again, Cruickshank et al. stress that the learning disabilities are specific, and are often in combination.

In the second chapter, "The Adolescent Years", Cruickshank, Morse and Johns discuss the nature of adolescence,--describing it as "a critical time because adolescents are making decisions and evolving patterns which set the course of their lives;" the

authors further stress that "the normal hazards of the age are considerably increased by the disability"(Cruickshank et al., p.11). While adolescence is a difficult time in any case, the precarious nature of the age is considerably enhanced by being learning disabled. The goal of the book, as set forth by the authors, is "to blend the two conditions of adolescence and adolescence learning disabilities as the latter struggle into adulthood"(Cruickshank et al., p.13). Throughout their work Cruickshank et al. emphasize adolescence and the adolescent struggles as being the salient features for individuals at this time,--as opposed to their special learning needs and disabilities.

The third chapter, "The Adolescent with Learning Disabilities" points out some of the inherent difficulty of adolescence, and a part of the "remedy" that adolescent individuals may require. Cruickshank et al. point out that, for adolescents, while "there may have been difficulty in finding friends at pre-adolescence,...., we can be assured it will be a more significant problem at adolescence"(Cruickshank et al., p.28). The authors here emphasize the "affective dimension" for learning disabled adolescents,--pointing to their increased difficulty in finding peer-friends(compared to non-learning disabled adolescents). The authors maintain also that "one of the best things we could do for them is to make available conflict-free energy to apply to the normal developmental tasks [italics]"(Cruickshank et al., p.23). One of the things that adolescents need is a positive model of healthy and "well-functioning" adults.

In their first chapter the authors had described "the drastic re-working of the self in search of a new identity" that so strongly characterizes adolescence(Cruickshank et al., p.14). In their fourth and final chapter on adolescence, "Resolving the Identity Crisis", Cruickshank et al. stress this adolescent function once again. Adolescents must develop "a serviceable moral code"; "they must do this in a society where general morality is not usually clearly defined, with fractioned adult values exhibited all around them"(Cruickshank et al., p.35). Soul-searching and "remaking of self" are characteristic of adolescence, conditions exacerbated by the "fractioned adult values" of modern society. Once again,

for learning disabled adolescents, "the normal hazards of the age are considerably increased by the disability"(Cruickshank et al., p. 11).

The authors remark upon a particular "success story", that of "Raymond", who, after participating in the afore-described elementary learning disabilities program, went on in life with his developed "problem-solving ability"(and with very supportive parents) to compile many successes for himself. Indeed, at the time of the interview, Raymond has attained to the position of "lawyer." The authors conclude their account of Raymond with emphasizing the primary aid which adults can give to learning disabled adolescents:

The adult role starts by not being or acting like an adolescent. Adolescents need benign symbols of understanding--adults who exemplify sound behavior. More than that, they need adults who act on the basis of principles, models who both enjoy life and have mastered its trials reasonably well. (Cruickshank et al., p.42)

I agree with this. I would only emphasize that, among adolescents, learning disabled adolescents have a particular need for "benign symbols of understanding", adults who are models "acting on the basis of principles", and who "exemplify sound behavior."

Cruickshank, Morse and Johns proceed to discuss five individuals (in addition to the above-mentioned Raymond) who had participated in the highly-structured program designed for learning disabled children. The program itself included "a total concept of environment and space..., thoughtful relationships between the child and adults, and the utilization of structured teaching materials" (Cruickshank et al., p.46). The "follow-up" herein described involves five of the thirty children originally enrolled in the program, now aged 19-23,--ten to twelve years after their original involvement. The first individual, Ronald, is described as a "Success through Structure" situation(chapter heading). Ronald at the time of the interview worked in a delicatessen, lived with his parents, and had successfully completed a "bar mitzvah." To this time Ronald had had very little experience in sexual relationships. The authors ascribe Ronald's success in "surviving adolescence" to two factors: first, his successfully completing

a highly structured program when young,--wherein he had learned to control his behavior, and second, the direction, support and further structure provided to him by his mother. Parental support and structure can be very important for learning disabled adolescents.

Andy, the "Perennial Adolescent in a Hostile World", is depicted as a "marginal success." Described as a very hyperactive child, the authors note that his neurotic and perseverative factors (continued performance of the same patterned motor activity, speech or writing) were "not affected noticeably by his clinical teaching experience"(Cruickshank et al., p.75). Yet, the authors maintain that there is evidence that the school program "provided the things he needed to achieve academically,"--that is, for his high school diploma, for his successfully completing his navy exam, for his driver's license(Cruickshank et al., p.75). Andy's hyperactive behavior was not noticeably affected by his educative experience, yet he did obtain "the things he needed to achieve academically." Cruickshank et al. conclude that "Andy is one whose academic needs were met through clinical teaching. He exemplifies, however, those who need much more in-depth therapy than the schools can usually provide"(Cruickshank et al., p.100).

John the authors pointedly mark as one "Unequipped for Life." He is described as one who as a child has had dyslexia,--and as one who also has had severe reading problems throughout his life. John also was a very hyperactive child. With John still in high school at the time of his interview, Cruickshank et al. here make one of their strongest criticisms of the secondary public school system,--and of its failure to address the needs of learning disabled adolescents:

We must ask ourselves, what in reality has the secondary school provided John other than sports and an outlet for excessive energy? One might even ask whether or not the school used *[italics]* John and his abilities in sports. As a youth, who will be nearly twenty when he graduates, is it right that ceramics is his only perceived vocational outlet? (Cruickshank et al., p.126)

And again:

Is it revolutionary to expect that secondary schools and teachers will address the unique needs of adolescents with learning disabilities? When will this group of educators come to understand and effectively respond to the long-standing concept of individual differences in youths? (Cruickshank et al., p.126)

The authors are here clearly very angry concerning John's situation,--and in my estimation justifiably so. How can a young man of twenty years, just graduating from high school, be left with only "ceramics" as "his only perceived vocational outlet?" Clearly the secondary schools have failed John, in terms of addressing his "life-survival" needs. There is in my estimation and obvious need for secondary schools and teachers to "address the unique needs of adolescents with learning disabilities."

Tom, the fourth individual, is described by the authors as "A Social and Educational Failure." Coming from an environmentally deprived home background, Tom has experienced poor teaching in his early home and school years, and has also severe emotional problems(in part resulting from his parents' divorce). The authors describe him as exhibiting in school "aggressive behavior, clowning in class, verbal sexual overtones, some truancy and tardiness[,] [and] academic problems"(Cruickshank et al., ch.8). At the time of the interview Tom was serving a sentence in the penitentiary, and he saw for himself no future on leaving the prison,--except for his eventual return. Tom's situation is surely a bleak one. The authors point out that they have a responsibility to report their failures as well as their successes(and partial successes) in their learning disabilities educational endeavors,--although certainly, in my estimation, they cannot themselves be held responsible for Tom's situation in life. As in other educational fields, there are failures in learning disabilities education. Failures in learning disabilities, often being associated with "drastic" social consequences, tend to stand out more starkly, and more clearly.

The final individual, Scott, is depicted by the authors as an "Order Out of Chaos" situation. Coming from an "awful family life", Scott experienced in the learning disabilities program strong improvement in reading and in other skills,--with the par-

ticularly strong aid of an especial teacher. The authors state that "we believe that the clinical teaching program provided him pause and structure, permitting him to more thoughtfully integrate his skills and emotions. It provided him a knowledge that he could succeed"(Cruikshank et al., p.163). Scott at the time of the interview worked at a transmission repair shop, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. He was married, to a "lovely wife" "Wendy", and was working towards a "master technician rating." Following is a sample of the interview dialogue with Scott,--and of the authors' interviewing technique:

A(authors): 'Do you remember...[the days of the elementary school program]?'

A: 'You were voted the one least likely to succeed at that point[second grade, age eight or nine]. I believe also you had failed at least once by then.'

S(Scott): 'I can believe it.'

A: 'Now why say that?'

S: 'I was full of hell.' (Cruikshank et al., p.165-6).

The authors additionally note that Scott as a child exhibited "provocative behavior, short attention span, and acting out behavior,--such as lying, temper tantrums, attention-getting mannerisms; there was a suspected probable neurological basis; in his educational program Scott exhibited rapid intellectual achievement"(Cruikshank et al., p.165-6). Scott as a child exhibited serious behavioral and attention-span problems. He did also show "rapid intellectual achievement", and, as the previous quotation demonstrates, he had at the time of the interview a sense of humor about himself in looking back on his past, a sense of maturity.

Scott then proceeds to describe his "phase approach to life",--in which he identifies one predominant goal, completes the corresponding "phase", and then moves on to his next goal. His getting married to Wendy he describes as a particular "phase", or goal. Scott remarks that his "best experience",--or best phase, was his service in the military. What initiated his phase approach to life was perhaps his "best decision": to leave his heroin-addiction and to acquire new friends(outside of the drug-using group). Cruikshank et al. further remark, interviewing Scott:

A: 'You had a pretty rough childhood, didn't you?'

S: 'It was tough.'

A: 'You had a rough childhood up until you hit the army.'

S: 'Until I [italics] could do something about my life.'

A: 'Yes, until you [italics] could do something about it is right.' (Cruikshank et al., p.147)

When Scott "hit the army" was when he was finally able to "do something about his life", when Scott was finally able to take control of his own life and to make his own decisions. As the authors finally remark concerning Scott, he "has indeed made a remarkable adjustment. He often exemplifies maturity beyond his years [my own underlining]" (Cruikshank et al., p.187).

THE LEARNING DISABLED ADOLESCENT: CONCLUSION

I have spent so much space in discussing the above individuals so as to the more fully illustrate the complexity of the learning disability problem for adolescents. These individuals are, first and foremost, human beings. As human beings they possess "a total human dimension", the positive and negative characteristics and choices in life which we all as human beings possess. For these persons the biological and life-process changes that are coincidental with adolescence are far more significant in their lives than the particular handicaps induced by their particular disabilities. In the last-mentioned interview, Scott displays his "total human dimension",--as well as his maturity, in his joking with the interviewing author, his childhood learning disability instructor. After commenting on his past school experiences, the author questions Scott "Now why say that?"; Scott replies, "I was full of hell" (Cruikshank et al., p.166). Continuing in his interview, Scott remarks on how he had a rough childhood, and life,--until he could "step into control of it, until he "could do something about my [his] life. This is, of course, an extremely important insight into life, and for Scott, into himself. For all of us, whether "learning disabled" or not, it may be very important for our self-realization as individuals, and for our identity as human beings, that we not simply "let life happen to us." As with Scott, it may be very important that we "step into life", taking control as we can of our own lives and assuming responsibility for ourselves. Indeed, the life-experience of growing up through the "crucible"

of learning disabilities may well induce an advanced level of maturity,--an increased awareness of one's own individual character as a human being, and of one's most true relationship to one's self and to life. As Cruickshank et al. finally state about Scott, "he often exemplifies maturity beyond his years(Cruickshank et al., p.187).

Seeing learning disabled adolescents as human beings, with the life-problems of other human beings and with the particular life-changes and self-questioning struggles associated with adolescence, is very important for seeing such individuals in their most total and complete human context. However, the life-processes and changes experienced by all adolescents are certainly exacerbated by the learning disability condition. The learning disability condition causes academic problems for the individuals involved at the high school level, usually necessitating some form of increased personal attention or of at least sensitivity and awareness on the part of regular classroom teachers. The condition can also increase socialization difficulties for the learning disabled individuals,--and most particularly in the school context wherein acceptance among one's peers is often associated with a certain amount of academic achievement and other school-related success. Cruickshank, Morse and Johns continue in the third part of their book, "The Secondary School", noting that in high school certain academic decisions have to be made concerning learning disabled students. These include whether or not there will be an academic concentration which bypasses reading skill deficiencies, a concentration on the basic literacy skills, or lastly a concentration on vocational skills(Cruickshank et al., p.196). Usually, for learning disabled adolescents, a combination of the latter two will be appropriate. However, depending on the individual's disability and academic achievements to this point in time, and as well upon the individual's personal motivation and interests, an academic concentration may be appropriate.

Lilly Goodman and Lester Mann, in their book Learning Disabilities in the Secondary School(1976), maintain that "the primary instructional responsibility of the learning disabilities teacher at the secondary level is the teaching of basics in the areas of

mathematics and language arts"(Goodman and Mann, p.100). As pointed out above, my view is that there is no "definite teaching prescriptive concern" suitable for all learning disabled students. The particular mix of the above-described three areas of possible instructional concern depends very much on the student's academic performance to date, and also upon his or her interests and motivation.

MAINSTREAMING IN THE PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Goodman and Mann note that in their experience with learning disabled adolescents "students were required and expected to read any material which could be acquired and was within their grasp,"--and this in spite of the many classroom-accomodations sometimes made for such students(such as for avoidance of printed material) (Goodman and Mann, p.202). They continue, stating that "our experience supports the notion that exercise in written expression reinforces reading achievement and that reading itself is one of the most productive facets of remediation"(Goodman and Mann, p.202). The authors here correlate writing practice and reading achievement, stressing the value of reading itself as "one of the most productive facets of remediation." The authors continue, emphasizing three factors which they have found very productive in adolescent learning disability instruction. These factors are consistency and continuity of programming, systematic monitoring and evaluation,--including frequent evaluation of student responses, and "complementary task reinforcement", such as complementary practice in reading and writing activities(Goodman and Mann, p.202). These are basically sound teaching practices in any field,--but they have particular relevance in the instruction of learning disabled adolescents.

Lilly Goodman and Lester Mann stress the mastery approach for learning disabilities instruction, emphasizing the "mastery of basic skills in written language and mathematics"(Goodman and Mann, p.168). Referring to Bloom(1968) they define mastery for a subject area as the achievement by the course's completion of "specific major instructional objectives." The mastery approach

seems to me a good and well-tried approach to instruction,--and particularly appropriate for learning disabilities instruction. I would only note additionally that the key concepts and/or objectives of one unit should be grasped satisfactorily by the students, before the teacher proceeds to the next unit.

Appropriate teaching methodology designed for the instruction of secondary-level learning disabled students is of slight amount, and usually only partly developed. Goodman and Mann's final comment at the end of their seventh chapter, "Programming for the Secondary Learning Disabled Student: A Model of Service", is particularly indicative of their approach to secondary learning disabled instruction:

Programs, curricula and supplementary materials, diagnostic prescriptive techniques, and the like, specifically intended for secondary learning disability pupils remain to be developed. We thus recommend that the reader accept our current philosophy concerning the programming for such pupils: adapt existing programs and materials from regular education so that they can be used effectively for instructing the learning disabled youth at the secondary level [italics]." (Goodman and Mann, p.133)

This is exactly my own recommendation for the instruction of mainstreamed learning disabled students in the high school English classroom, that "existing programs and materials" from the regular classroom can be modified "so that they can be used effectively for instructing the learning disabled youth at the secondary level." I would add that most of the adaptations needed for high school learning disability instruction in the regular classroom would be minor ones, and that modifications in teaching techniques that would be of a beneficial nature for the learning disabled students (such as a concentration on the teaching of study skills) should be made only if these modifications are favorable educationally to a majority of the classes' students anyway.

Goodman and Mann conclude with their "guide for curricular systems", for learning disabled adolescent instruction:

- 1) a "comprehensive instructional developmental sequence;"
- 2) an appealing appearance and format;
- 3) a clearly defined scope and sequence(preferably behavioral);

4) an accompanying "curricular management-evaluation system;" and, 5) a "mastery of basic skills" focus.

All of the above are reasonable or "common-sensical" standard teaching practice,--but they are of particular value for learning disabled adolescent instruction. I would emphasize number five, the "mastery of basic skills" focus,--which was discussed earlier as the "mastery approach" to learning disabilities instruction.

SPECIFIC TEACHING TECHNIQUES AND STUDENT STUDY SKILLS

There are various specific teaching methodologies and student study skills that can be employed in the English mainstreamed high school classroom for the more helpful and productive instruction of, and use by, learning disabled adolescents. In their book The Learning Disabled Adolescent: Program Alternatives in the Secondary School (1978), George Marsh and Carol and Bill Gearheart expound some of their beliefs and practices in these areas. In their third chapter, "The Secondary School", they point out that "unlike many European schools where all but the most academically talented students are excluded from secondary schools, American education attempts to meet the needs of all students while heralding the standards of academic excellence" (Gearheart and Marsh, p.41). While this is the American educational philosophy,--and as previously stated this philosophy is strongly urged and supported in its fullest implementation by Cruickshank, Morse and Johns, the Gearhearts and Marsh maintain that

the reality is that schools continue to be evaluated in terms of achievement scores in tool subjects and content areas of study, and these circumstances reinforce the rigid, traditional patterns of academic expectation that militate against all students who fall below the median on standardized tests and especially against learning disabled students. (Gearheart and Marsh, p.42)

This statement is certainly a strong indictment of "the reality" of American public schools,--wherein evaluation is in terms of "achievement scores in tool subjects and content areas." Very many students thus encounter, unfavorably, an inherent bias in the educational system, a bias that "militates against all students

who fall below the median on standardized tests." This bias works particularly strongly against learning disabled students. It could be said that "academically non-successful students" "fall through the cracks" of the American public educational system.

The authors in part resolve this dilemma between American educational philosophy and instructional practice,--and in terms of the afore-mentioned instructional decisions necessary to be made concerning learning disabled students in high school. The authors maintain that

the central question becomes whether the schools can prepare students who can effectively meet the demands of a complex society by training students in job entry skills, while at the same time maintaining the highest levels of liberal arts-oriented scholastic achievement. (Gearheart and Marsh, p.42)

For learning disabled students, there needs to be attention to both "job entry skills" and to "liberal arts-oriented scholastic achievement", in the secondary schools.

In the second section of the above-discussed chapter, "Components of a Secondary Program", Gearheart and Marsh set forth the proposition that

there is little reason to believe that the self-contained classroom will be of much benefit to the majority of students at the secondary level...we have elected to concentrate on the resource room as the most efficient and reasonable method of providing educational services for LD students. (Gearheart and Marsh, p.57)

I agree that the resource room and the specialized and individualized instruction it allows do provide "the most efficient and reasonable method" of effective teacher monitoring of student progress and of student specific skill development. However, I do also maintain that most of the "curricular exposure" and even of specific skill development for learning disabled adolescents can take place in the regular English classroom. Some accommodation for learning disabled students whereby they spend most of their time in the regular classroom and some of their time in a special services resource room is the most desirable alternative. Gearheart and Marsh in the above statement do not directly disagree with my contention here. Their emphasis above is on

learning disabilities remediation,--and their focus includes students with the more severe disabilities and disability-combinations. My own concern is with the less severely learning disabled students, and with regular classroom teaching techniques that are appropriate and effective for the whole mainstreamed student class population.

In their chapter "Accommodation and Compensatory Teaching", the Gearhearts and Marsh define these terms as referring to "a process whereby the learning environment of the student, either some of the elements or the total environment, is modified to promote learning. The focus is on changing the learning environment or the academic requirements so that the student may learn in spite of fundamental weakness or deficiency [*italics*]" (Gearheart and Marsh, p.85). Such alterations in "the learning environment" or in "the academic requirements" are at times necessary for the instruction of learning disabled students. The authors further add that "the goal is a positive change in academic performance that alters the methods of instruction, or the technique of evaluation without reducing the quality of performance" (Gearheart and Marsh, p.87). "Techniques of evaluation" and "methods of instruction" to some extent do need to be tailored to the needs of the learning disabled students. My own prescription for the most desirable "teaching accommodation" or "compensatory mix" situation is that described in the preceeding paragraph.

ACCOMODATION AND COMPENSATORY TEACHING

In their "Accommodation and Compensatory Teaching" chapter the Gearhearts and Marsh offer several specific suggestions concerning curriculum modification, accomodatory teaching techniques and particular study skills that are especially important for the instruction of learning disabled adolescents. Concerning curriculum modification the authors suggest the following:

- a) "simplifying and clarifying the reading content of texts and other materials of a course" (rewriting textbooks, for example);
- b) "the expressed development of criteria for mastery of the material that is known to the students and teachers;"

c) tapes with "the simplified material or text transcribed for assistance"(this would give to the students a simultaneous auditory and visual input of the material); and finally,

d) "films"(Gearheart and Marsh, p.89).

All of these ideas seem good to me. I would especially recommend "b", however, "the development of mastery criteria", as being the single most important curriculum modification and development idea presented,--and as being particularly important for the instruction of learning disabled adolescents. This teaching technique has been presented earlier as "the mastery approach" and as the "mastery of basic skills focus." It is a technique beneficial to all students,--though particularly helpful to "low-level" students and to slow students, and to learning disabled students.

In terms of accomodatory teaching techniques, the Gearhearts and Marsh suggest the following:

a) specific course objectives,--as with a list of course objectives and requirements distributed to the students at the beginning of the Unit;

b) informing the learning disabilities specialist as necessary if and when a student falls behind;

c) lecture notes;

d) technical vocabulary identification;

e) abstract concept elucidation;

f) oral and written reports(preferably edited and typed);

g) modification of homework assignments as necessary,--as in coordination of assignments with other classes and possible reductions in the work-load; and

h) some instruction in scheduling,--as in how to deal with multiple assignments and in how to make the most productive use of study time(Gearheart and Marsh, p.89). Again, all of the above look very good to me. The English teacher does have, however, strong limits on the amount of time available to him or to her, on the amount of time available for these particular pursuits. I advocate these accomodatory teaching techniques, singly or in combination, within these time constraints. I would stress, however, the lecture notes handouts as being especially helpful listening and study aids, for learning disabled adolescents. If

the notes outline the main points of what is covered in the lecture, the student is "cued" as to what to listen for as the teacher speaks. With the lecture notes presented to the student in outline form, the student can then fill in additional information and details. In addition to the accomodatory teaching techbiques listed above, I would also stress in-class reading and writing assignments,--and in particular, writing assignments. Even if only a few sentences are written each day, such practice is invaluable for students having trouble with literacy skills.

Study skills covered in the "Accomodation and Compensatory Teaching" chapter that would be particularly helpful to learning disabled adolescents start with the SQ3R technique. This technique contains the components "Survey",--which can take the form of title-outlines, charts, and graphs, "Question",--as the student's anticipatory questions concerning an assignment(what he will be looking for in his reading; this can take the form of a pre-reading exercise), "Read",--reading the assignment, "Reflect",--considering what has been read(as, "Have the anticipatory questions been answered?"), and finally "Reread",--which can be necessary for the completion of the anticipatory questions and/or of study questions(Gearheart and Marsh, p.94). Other study skills include the following:

a) the teaching of different reading rates for different materials(one should read according to one's reading purposes; a slower rate is desirable for critical reading of texts, for analyzing, for evaluating, or for finding specific details);

b) the teaching of a study routine, including for example how to use library references and how to prepare for tests;

c) teaching students the inter-relationship between their environment and their study skills(for example, certain types of study may require a more quiet environment); and

d) teaching notetaking skills. In regards to the latter the authors stress tape-recordings, teacher-prepared outlines, attention on the part of the students to the facts and ideas presented and emphasized by the teacher(visually and/or orally), and finally student outling,--as with the students developing a shorthand for use in short teacher lectures. Additionally

the authors point out that the students must not lose their notebooks! The authors note here that developing a shorthand or any other "notational technique" will be very difficult for learning disabled students with symbolic disorders (Gearheart and Marsh, p.94-96). It is very important for the regular classroom teacher to be in close contact with the learning disabilities specialist,--so as to know more exactly the characteristics and abilities of his or her learning disabled students.

Concerning preparing for thests, the Gearhearts and Marsh point out that some teachers are unreasonable in their expectations, and that a certain "omega list" of less-desirable questions (or question-types) can be developed. The authors display a preference for short essay tests, with their emphasis on original thinking and on the students' exhibiting their writing abilities. Such tests can be taxing for some learning disabled students.

RECOMMENDED STUDY SKILLS

Of the various study skills presented above I would recommend the SQ3R technique, for reading, continual and frequent writing practice, for writing, and the netetaking skills, for student development of study skill. Learning disabled students very often need help in structuring and sequencing their activities,--and the SQ3R approach is very helpful in this regard. There can be no substitute for writing practice in the learning of writing, for "students learn to write by writing." Developing good notetaking skills is very helpful for learning disabled students,--most of whom exhibit some difficulty in auditory or visual skills (or both). Such skills include recording, encoding into memory (auditory or visual), and recalling (retrieval from memory). Effective notetaking is a good cueing technique,--a positive and rewarding practice in looking and listening for the "distinctive features" (primarily the main ideas) of a teacher's presentation.

Concerning the discipline of study, Marsh, Gearheart and Gearheart emphasize as well the limitations the teacher may experience with particular individuals. The authors maintain that "the ability to dedicate oneself to the discipline of study is developed on

an individual basis. The teacher can only train the student in techniques of study"(Gearheart and Marsh, p.96). In large measure the responsibility for the implementation of the teacher-taught study techniques falls upon the student. Different students grow and mature at different rates. Dedication to study and to good use of study time develops at different rates. It is important at times for the teacher to keep in mind the limitations of his or her educational efforts,--and of her or his educational responsibility.

CONTRACTING

In their seventh chapter, "Maximizing motivation at the secondary level", the Gearhearts and Marsh delve into that awkward and sometimes confusing area of "contracting systems." The authors define contracts as "joint agreements between a student and a teacher to accomplish an objective. This can be a contract for a specific academic task or to have the student attempt a task" (Gearheart and Marsh, p.130). The teacher and student enter together into a "joint agreement" for the purpose of attempting or accomplishing "a specific academic task." The authors continue:

Contracts involve the student and the teacher in a commitment to one another in a realistic and responsible manner. Perhaps the most important feature of contracting is the involvement of the student in deciding what the task will entail(objective) and what the reward will be(reinforcement). (Gearheart and Marsh, p.130)

Student involvement is an essential, perhaps the salient feature, of contracting. The guidelines for contracting listed below are adapted by the authors from L. Homme's How to Use Contingency Contracting in the Classroom(1970). These guidelines are:.

- 1) The contingency(reward) should be immediate [especially in the beginning].
- 2) Initial contracts should call for and reward small approximations.
- 3) Reward frequently with small amounts.
- 4) The contract should call for and reward accomplishment rather than obedience.
- 5) Reward the performance after it occurs.
- 6) The contract must be fair.
- 7) The terms of the contract must be clear.

- 8) The contract must be honest.
- 9) The contract must be positive.
- 10) Contracting as a method must be used systematically.
(Gearheart and Marsh, p.131)

I think these guidelines are very good. As far as the nature of the contract itself is concerned, I would particularly emphasize number two above,--that "initial contracts should call for and reward small approximations." Those students,--including many learning disabled students, who will most likely have a strong need for special contracting will also most likely need at first small, incremental successes in their work. Successful completion of such contracts may provide an often otherwise-missed sense of achievement and accomplishment, and success, in dealing with school work. As Sargent, Swartzbaugh and Sherman state concerning the "Practical English" program, "success in school work motivates students to work more and behave better"(Sargent et al., p.102). Also, importantly, there should be a reward associated with such contracts,--such as an extra "free time" period, or a free-reading period. Especially in the beginning, the attendant senses of achievement and success upon successfully completing a contract, in themselves, are not likely to be sufficient motivation for the successful completion of new contracts.

Contracting can be awkward, and especially confusing, because of the extent of personal involvement required ^{between} the teacher and her or his students. This can be true particularly because of the amount of time necessary for the teacher to successfully initiate, arrange and complete separate contracts with individual students. Contracting here is not presented as a "be-all"/"end-all" solution for student academic or behavioral difficulties. However, for particular students at particular times, contracting may be for the teacher the most productive and efficient use of his or her time. Contracts should be specific, honest and fair, as the guidelines above point out, and above all they should be clear and precise as to the goal and desired outcome. The guidelines above should dispel some of the confusion about contracting,--and I do recommend contracting as being particularly helpful for many learning disabled students. As the authors conclude in their own assessment of contracting,

teachers sometimes feel very uncomfortable when rewarding students for doing what they should do anyway. This feeling, and the philosophy it implies, does have some merit. However, many students, because of learning disabilities, have missed the normal developmental experiences that would permit them to achieve satisfactorily. (Gearheart and Marsh, p.131)

SOME MORE PROBLEMS

Cruickshank, Morse and Johns, in their afore-mentioned book's eleventh chapter, "Assessment and Planning", point out some of the particular problems learning disabled students experience in high school classrooms. Their first difficulty is in receiving the information delivered, or what the authors describe as attending or attention problems. These result from, and in part cause, visual, auditory and behavioral difficulties,--such as "hyperactivity", or acting-out behavior. Their second major difficulty is what the authors call "executing the work." They describe this as resulting from the following, singly or in combination:

- a) following directions(oral or written);
 - b) copying assignments from the chalkboard;
 - c) copying actual work material from the board;
 - d) organizing a response to an assignment;
 - e) formulating questions and approaching the teacher for clarification;
 - f) lacking specific skills for a task;
 - g) estimating time;
 - h) lack of confidence;
 - i) self-consciousness, "embarrassment";
 - and j) sequencing difficulty(Cruickshank, Morse and Johns, p.212).
- Of the deficiencies listed above, I would identify letters "c" and "d" as the most critical for learning disabled adolescents,--as these require greater amounts of attention-to-task and "work-effort" on the part of the students. Certainly many of these deficiencies can be countered through "teacher special clarification attempts"(as when a teacher gives a short lecture or special directions) and through teacher instruction in some of the study skills mentioned earlier. In all cases, however, it is certainly

of benefit to learning disabled students for the teacher to be sensitive to their individual needs and to have some awareness of the potential difficulties which may arise,--either for the teacher in instructing or for the students in classroom functioning.

Some suggestions Cruickshank et al. make for dealing with the above situations involve material and assignment structure,--for which learning disabled students usually have a strong need, more open flexible classrooms in which some freedom of movement and conversation is allowed, and also specific information regarding the individual's particular learning style. This last can be partly found out through "structured interviews", and also through pertinent student questionnaires(Cruickshank et al., p.215, 218). Their recommended "Course of Action"(chapter twelve heading) for reading instruction involves the components of 1)"task breakdown", wherein the task is broken into its components and is ordered and re-ordered by the teacher, and 2)"multisensory input", whereby the teacher presents the student with a paired modality input(usually auditory and visual), and the student is placed in as active a role as possible. An example of such a dual input is that in which the student follows a text visually while at the same time hearing it read to him(or her), or hearing its recording on a tape. The student of course must later be held accountable for such learned information!

The authors further discuss reading instruction in terms of the Fernald remedial reading-teaching method, which "highlights the task breakdown approach which must accompany all instruction for the learning disabled pupil"(Cruickshank et al., p.228). The authors recommend their own personally tested and successfully used "Gillingham/Stillman" method of teaching reading,--which stresses the "alphabetic-phonetic" approach(Cruickshank et al., p. 228). In all cases, in regards to the teaching of reading and writing to learning disabled adolescents, Cruickshank, Morse and Johns emphasize that

reading and writing are probably the most important skills for any person to possess. As such instruction in these areas constitutes a major responsibility, not

only of the clinical teaching specialists and teachers of English, but for teachers of social science, driver education, vocational arts, and all other subject areas of the secondary school. (Cruickshank et al., p.238)

The teaching of reading and writing is the responsibility of all of the teachers of the secondary school.

TEACHING WRITING

Concerning the teaching of writing to learning disabled adolescents Janet Johnson and Marlane Newman have written an interesting article, "Use of Daily Journal Writing to Assess and Teach Written Expression to Handicapped Learners",--which occurs in the pamphlet Teaching Handicapped Students English(1981). This pamphlet includes fourteen chapters, seven concerning the elementary classroom and seven concerning the secondary classroom, and sets forth teaching strategies and techniques that have been tried in these classrooms, and that have worked. The authors of the article assert that journals "can provide assessment of strengths and weaknesses in written expression, the success or failure of remediation techniques, data on interests and concerns of students, while personalizing the learning environment"(Johnson and Newman, p.46). The students in their classes were given the following instructions, for writing in their journals:

- 1) they may write entries in any way they wish;
- 2) words do not need to be spelled correctly;
- 3) they should do their best to make themselves understood;
- 4) concerning their spelling, they may check a dictionary or ask a friend for help;

5) the students not currently writing at all may dictate their entries to a teacher-aide; and finally

6) the students need not show their work to anyone but the teacher(Johnson and Newman, p.46). These directions are very clear, and are explicit as to what to write, how to write, and as to how to go about finding help, in the writing. The most important direction I would identify is number six,--which indicates the private(and hopefully confidential) nature of the journal. The teachers read the journals every day, making no corrections.

The teachers did frequently give notes back to the students, with comments on the content,--and/or asking a question. The authors stress, however, that at no time were errors pointed out by the teachers to the students.

Considering the improvementⁱⁿ the students' writing during the time of their journal-writing, Johnson and Newman maintain that

journal writing has proven to be an effective method of motivating students to write. Rarely have students protested. Nor have they often required reminders or encouragement. On some occasions students have requested that words needed for journal entries be included in spelling lists of directed lessons... (Johnson and Newman, p.47)

Journal-writing has proven indeed to be an effective writing-teaching method for the authors! Particularly worthy of note is their first statement above, that "journal writing has proven to be an effective method of motivating students to write." As many teachers know, effective motivation techniques can be few and hard to find. In relation to standardized written achievement tests, the authors disclose that "in some cases,..., the journal entries have indicated that the children's organization and content are of higher quality when they use their own language patterns than is suggested by scores of standardized tests"(Johnson and Newman, p.47). Indeed, journals do provide students with good opportunities for self-monitoring of their own writing and for self-correcting of their errors, for "creative" writing experiments, and for their writing in the subject areas of their own interests. This last will clearly help increase the students interest in and motivation for journal-writing. Journal-writing also provides students with what is ultimately their most important "instructor" in writing,--the need for which is perhaps never quite fulfilled: practice, in writing. Students learn how to write by writing! Johnson and Newman conclude, in reference to journal-writing, that "it provides an opportunity for students to practice and apply skills learned in a nonthreatening and motivating situation" (Johnson and Newman, p.48). Journal-writing can be an important factor in "the personalization of the learning environment."

ALLEY AND DESHLER: INTRODUCTION

In their book Teaching the Learning Disabled Adolescent: Strategies and Methods(1979), Gordon Alley and Donald Deshler further explore the educational needs of learning disabled adolescents. Describing the difficulty in making the change from the elementary to the secondary school setting, Alley and Deshler assert that

the demands of the secondary curriculum are much different from the demands of the elementary curriculum. The secondary curriculum is based on content acquisition... Unfortunately, many learning disabled adolescents have not mastered these skills [reading, writing, spelling, mathematics, and spoken language] well enough to compete with their peers in junior and senior high school without supportive services. (Alley and Deshler, p.5)

The basic literacy skills, as well as competency in some basic mathematics skills, are necessary for successful performance in secondary schools. In the secondary schools the emphasis is placed on "content acquisition", or academics, and as mentioned earlier, this academic "bias" works against learning disabled students. Alice B. Adams. in her article "Dyslexia: Hidden Handicap in the Classroom"(Dec., 1985), echoes the above statement in her stressing the handicapped nature of potential college students having dyslexia. Dyslexia, a specific learning disability, is primarily concerned with reading and writing reversals and omissions. Adams asserts that "any special help given dyslexics is [italics] fair. It simply helps right the imbalance created by nature"(Adams, p.261). Dyslexics, and other learning disabled students, have a strong and legitimate need for "supportive services" in high school so as to be able to "compete with their peers" in the academically-oriented curriculum.

Alley and Deshler continue, describing their book as presenting "an alternative approach to meeting the needs of many learning disabled adolescents currently placed in special support programs at the secondary level"(Alley and Deshler, p.8). Describing their approach as a learning strategies model, the authors have designed it to accomplish the following: "To teach learning disabled adolescents strategies that will facilitate their acquisition, organiza-

tion, storage, and retrieval of information, thus allowing them to cope with the demands of the secondary curriculum and the demands of social interaction"(Alley and Deshler, p.8). The above difficulties for learning disabled students, the "acquisition, organization, storage and retrieval of information" have been alluded to previously. Specific methods designed to aid in these processes, in reference to writing, follow.

ALLEY, DESHLER AND ADAMS: THE TEACHING OF WRITING

In their fourth chapter, "Writing: Strategies and Methods", Alley and Desler present many specific learning strategies helpful to the learning disabled adolescent in the acquisition of writing skills. Quoting Lerner(1976), they assert that "poor facility in expressing thoughts through written language is probably the most prevalent disability of the communication skills" (Alley and Deshler, p.104). This assertion is reinforced by Alice Adams,--referring to Susan Vogel's "On Developing LD College Programs"(1982), when she asserts that "written expression is 'the area of greatest concern' to dyslexic students"(Adams, p.260). Expression of one's self in writing is "probably the most prevalent disability of the communication skills."

Referring to the work of Chaffant and Scheffelin(1969), Alley and Deshler present a specific sequence of steps involved in "the writing act." These steps are as follows:

1. Scribbling
2. Tracing
 - a. connected letters of figures
 - b. disconnected letters of figures
3. Copying
 - a. from a model
 - b. from memory
 - c. symbolic and nonsymmetric
4. Completion Tasks
 - a. figure completion
 - b. word completion--supplying missing letters
 - i. multiple choice
 - ii. recall
 - c. sentence completion
5. Writing from Dictation
 - a. writing letters as they are spoken
 - b. writing words and sentences

- c. supplying missing word
- d. supplying missing sentence
- 6. Propositional Writing. (Alley and Deshler, p.106)

The above seems to me an interesting and helpful format for thinking about and for teaching some of the steps involved in writing,--or some of the steps involved in the process of learning how to write. Alley and Deshler emphasize that "this chapter focuses on methods for dealing with LD adolescents who are competent in skills 1 through 4 but evidence written expression deficits in tasks related to skills 5 and 6"(Alley and Deshler, p.106).

In their discussion of learning disabled students' strategies for improved writing, the authors point out that "the ability to monitor one's performance in writing is critical to good performance, Deshler(1978) has found that LD high school students evidence a monitoring deficit on academic tasks that require their detection of self-generated and externally generated errors"(Alley and Deshler, p.106). This means that, compared to "regular" students, learning disabled adolescents "pick up" on self-generated errors, and on errors generated from without, at a lesser rate. For those learning disabled adolescents who exhibit this lesser rate,--and perhaps also for those who do not, this lesser rate corresponds to a "deficit", or a lack, characteristic of their learning disability. Alice Adams echoes the above statement in her article on dyslexic students when she stresses that her own strategy in correcting dyslexic students' papers is "to emphasize strengths and focus on these while underlining errors and allowing the student to correct them"(Adams, p.263). This is one teaching technique that helps the students to "compensate" for the above pointed out deficiency.

Alley and Deshler proceed to outline "The Content Components of Writing", which include "generating ideas", "reflecting the world", "conceptualizing relationships", "explanatory schemes" and "expressing personal view." They continue with "The Craft Components of Writing",--which include "structuring paragraphs and themes", "developing vocabulary", "building sentences", "note-taking", "writing questions", "summarizing" and "monitoring written expression." These latter are essentially "skills considered

important for turning what is in the student's head into a visible product on paper"(Alley and Deshler, p.124). Also, the five preceding categories of "The Content Components of Writing" seem to me intriguing and creative ways of looking at the kinds of writing students can do. The list itself,--including such categories as "reflecting the world" and "expressing personal view", could possibly be viewed as a motivational factor for the students, in their writing.

In the second area mentioned above Adams would stress "building sentences." In her article on dyslexic potential college students she remarks that "one of the best techniques to improve their writing is sentence combining[reference to Vogel]"(Adams, p.262). Adams then mentions "notetaking",--"dyslexics almost certainly have difficulty with note taking," and this is the particular skill I would emphasize as the most important, long-lasting and valuable for learning disabled adolescents(Adams, p.263). Alley and Deshler describe three particular subdivisions of note-taking: first, "outlining", which follows the content sequentially, focusing on the main features; second, "formal notetaking", which is concise, focusing on the "essential matter"; and third, "informal notetaking", which is brief and spontaneous,--and which is done for the purpose of "assisting memory", or for later reference. As mentioned above, I would stress notetaking as the classroom study skill most beneficial to learning disabled students(and beneficial to most of the other students as well), and in particular I would emphasize "outlining",--with its stress on the proper sequence and on the main features of the content. Confusion over the "main features" of what is read or heard is an especially strong disability-component for learning disabled students.

A METHOD OF TEACHING WRITING

Alley and Deshler conclude their survey of the writing strategies and techniques appropriate for the instruction of learning disabled adolescents with a discussion of "Kerrigan's Integrated Method of Teaching Composition",--which is taken from William J. Kerrigan's "Writing to the Point: Six Basic Steps"(1974). The

authors describe the Kerrigan procedure as "a highly structured program; it approaches writing in a step-by-step fashion; and it allows students to interject their own creative ideas and experiences in the writing act"(Alley and Deshler, p.137). Used successfully in junior high through college levels, with remedial as well as with "normal" students, the object of the method is to produce "well-written themes." The steps of the Kerrigan approach are as follows:

- 1) Write a short simple declarative sentence that makes one statement.
- 2) Write three sentences about the sentence in Step One that are clearly and directly about the whole of the sentence, not just something in it.
- 3) Write four or five sentences about each of the three sentences in Step Two.
- 4) Make the material in the four or five sentences in Step Three as concrete and specific as possible. Go into detail. Give examples. Don't ask, 'What will I say next?' Say some more about what you have just said. Your goal is to say a lot about a little, not a little about a lot.
- 5) In the first sentence of the second paragraph and every paragraph following, insert a clear reference to the idea in the preceding paragraph.
- 6) Make sure every sentence in your theme is connected with, and makes clear reference to, the preceding sentence. (Alley and Deshler, p.137-139)

The above six steps provide a clear, and it seems to me a very good structured approach to the writing of themes. They are a good pattern to follow for most of the writing learning disabled students will have to "deal with",--in high school and in a possible later college experience(research papers are the one major writing-type which differs from this pattern). I very much recommend this approach for the teaching of writing themes, as well as for the teaching of most serious writing. It is a good beginning format for serious writing,--and it would be a valuable writing learning method for all of the students(as well as for the learning disabled students). The method's structured step-by-step format particularly recommends it for the instruction of learning disabled students.

MNEMONIC DEVICES

A particular memory aid gaining increasing credence in the learning disability literature,--beneficial to all students but to learning disabled students especially, is the use of various "memory enhancing strategies" that enable the student to more accurately recall studied information. These strategies are called "mnemonic devices." George Miller, Eugene Galanter and Karl Pribram, in their book Plans and the Structure of Behavior(1960), assert that

unless a person has some kind of Plan for learning, nothing happens. Subjects have read nonsense syllables hundreds of times and learned almost nothing about them if they were not aware that they would later be tested for recall. In order to get the list memorized, a subject must have that mysterious something called an 'intent to learn.' Given the intention, the act follows by a steady, slow heave of the will. (Miller et al., p.133)

In order to learn lists of nonsense syllables, individuals must have a "plan for learning", an "intent to learn."

The authors proceed to discuss a particular "one-is-a-bun" mnemonic device. This device consists of the following sequence of words for one through ten: "one is a bun", "two is a shoe", "three is a tree", "four is a door", "five is a hive", "six are sticks", "seven is heaven", "eight is a gate", "nine is a line", and "ten is a hen." In their experiment, Miller, Galanter and Pribram presented their subject with ten words to be memorized. The subject, after first memorizing the above "one-is-a-bun" rhyme, would make an association with each word on the list according to the corresponding numbered word in the rhyme. In their somewhat humorous presentation, Miller et al. state that "after the seventh word he [the subject] said that he was sure the first six were already forgotten. But we persevered(Miller et al., p.134). Much to the subject's surprise, he found that after the tenth word he was able to recall every word of the original list. Given the "number-in-order", he could name the word; given the word, he could name its "number-in-order." The subject remarked, somewhat amazed, "'And there is no stress',..., 'absolutely no sweat'" (Miller et al., p.135).

The above-mentioned procedure was repeated in a more controlled and rigorous experiment by Dr.s Mastropieri, Scruggs and Levin, in their article "Mnemonic Strategy Instruction with Learning Disabled Adolescents"(Journal of Learning Disabilities, 1985). In a couple of experiments involving initial lessons of the differing hardness levels of minerals, different study methods(three groups), and test for recall,--including a test designed for 24-hour delayed recall, they found that those students using the "one-is-a-bun"/study method demonstrated a better than two-to-one advantage in their recall over the other students. The authors conclude that "these two experiments substantiate the powerful effects of a combined keyword-pegword pictorial mnemonic strategy for learning the hardness levels of minerals;" and finally, that "these combined results suggest that LD students may have a greater need for the use of effective learning strategies"(Mastropieri et al., p.98). "Elaborative mnemonic techniques", as one type of "effective learning strategy", may well be beneficial to learning disabled students.

CONCLUSION: THE "ENGLISH IN EVERY CLASSROOM" PROGRAM

Having overviewed and discussed some of the significant literature on English Education for Learning Disabled Adolescents,--and having interpreted these ideas and interjected into the discussion many of my own comments, ideas and opinions on the teaching methodologies and study skills most appropriate to the education of these students, I will now present to the reader a particularly interesting and promising program for English Education, "English in Every Classroom." This program, developed principally by Daniel Fader, is presented in his book The New Hooked on Books (1976). One of the primary attractive features of this program is that it is designed to teach reading and writing to all the students in a classroom and in a school,--not just to the special needs students or to special needs classes.

In his opening chapter, "Remembering Ourselves", Daniel Fader immediately declares the universality of his educational ideas:

I believe literacy to be one of the learned responses to its world that makes humanity fully human. I believe

that one of the few significant differences between mankind and lower orders of creatures is our sense of our own history: We remember ourselves [italics]. So far as we know, other creatures--except for genetic imprint--cannot profit from their past as we can. And our past is still primarily conserved in written forms. (Fader, p.2)

Fader here sets forth an important function of literacy: its enabling us to "remember ourselves." Hopefully, this also would mean that we would benefit from our human past. As he says in the end-sentence of the above,--making his rationale for the teaching of literacy, "our past is still primarily conserved in written forms." Commenting on the requirements for "formal educability", Fader further asserts that "beyond sufficient intelligence [which learning disabled students do have], the sole requirement upon a student for formal educability--the capacity to learn a useful portion of what the school experience has to offer--is a belief in the future, an anticipation of tomorrow that carries with it a conviction of tomorrow's inevitability"(Fader, p.3). I certainly agree that a belief,--or at least a partial belief in "the real possibility", that there will be a tomorrow is an important requirement for any individual to function effectively,--in the school environment or any where else. Fader additionally defines "formal educability" here as "the capacity to learn a useful portion of what the school experience has to offer." This seems sufficient to me,--although I would add that my main concern here is with "academics", with the secondary school instruction of learning disabled students.

Fader continues, in his commenting upon "the doubt of tomorrow that grows in the poor soil of impoverished days"(Fader, p.2). Economic, social, cultural or otherwise "environmental deprivation" is a serious contributing factor to the formation of "the doubt of tomorrow" that grows in the minds of some young students, and the above can be serious factors in the formation of learning disabilities. The author finally remarks on the detrimental effect of TV,--and also of the increase in class size(30-40%), on the acquisition of reading among the students of the public schollos between 1950 and 1975. In particular he points out that parents read less, that they less "practice what they preach", and that parents less set a good example for their children, in their reading.

He finally concludes with an indictment of those parents who are overly-eager to blame the schools and the school personnel for the decline in the levels of literacy:

If reading was a widely-advocated and widely performed leisure time activity then [1950], it probably isn't now. And yet we express surprise, shock, chagrin and anger when we rediscover each year that more children read less well than their parents or older siblings did before them [italics]. (Fader, p.5)

THE PROGRAM

To compensate for these deficiencies in "literacy-exposure" and in literacy skills among today's students, Fader proposes his "English in Every Classroom" program. Developed in the correctional institutions of Garnett-Patterson School and Maxey Boy's Training School, both in Michigan, the program encompasses two main principles: Saturation, and Diffusion. Saturation means essentially the inundation of the classroom with reading materials of interest to and that will be read by the students. The object here is to get the students reading something,--and then to writing something (Fader here encourages the use of the journal). These materials should consist of the "non-threatening" and more readable materials available,--such as newspapers, magazines, and especially paperback books. Diffusion means the diffusion from the English teacher of the total responsibility for the teaching of literacy. As was remarked by Cruickshank, Morse and Johns earlier in this paper, "reading and writing are probably the most important skills for any person to possess" (Cruickshank et al., p.238). The possession to these skills in some degree is absolutely essential for learning disabled students in order that they may survive the middle school and high school experiences,--not to mention their potentially productive involvements in post-high school academic pursuits.

Fader maintains that responsibility for the acquisition of reading and writing skills should be shared by the English teacher with all of the other teachers of the school,--with Social Studies being a particularly appropriate academic subject for contributing

to this process. For example, easily readable materials could be maintained in the Social Studies room, Social Studies assignments and projects could be coordinated with English assignments and projects, and Social Studies papers could be held accountable to similar levels and standards of literacy as the corresponding current English papers. Thus, teaching literacy,--the primary function of the middle school and high school years, would be a shared responsibility among all of the school's teachers.

ADMINISTERING THE PROGRAM

In Chapter 8, "Administering the Program", James Duggins(a colleague of Daniel Fader's) remarks on the effects of the "English in Every Classroom" program on the students and teachers involved:

The most observable changes among both students and teachers were attitudinal. Students became and remained enormously enthusiastic about having paperback books in their classrooms. Our greatest pleasure, however, was in seeing the same enthusiasm among teachers [my own underlining]. Teachers who had become cynical after years of attempting to control and teach children whose values were in conflict with their own, children who could not or would not read, now were teachers who came to school anticipating the pleasure of settled classes that were manageable because they [the children] looked forward to reading. (Fader, p.214)

Not only the children, but also the teachers involved in the implementation of the "English in Every Classroom" program were affected positively and inspired by the program. How delightful to read and hear this in today's context of teachers cynical about non-interested and non-motivated students, in today's context of teachers cynical about teaching! This remark is in itself enough to recommend serious attention to and at least partial use of this program.

HOOKED ON RESEARCH

In Chapter 5, "Hooked on Research", Elton McNeil,--another co-worker and researcher of Daniel Fader's, points out that the

"English in Every Classroom program works. After discussing its heavy reliance of the use of paperbacks, he stresses that student attitudes towards school(and teachers!), towards books and writing, and perhaps most important ultimately towards themselves, changed, and improved, after the implementation of the program. He also points out that "such success with such children in such environments"(that is, with "problem children" in correctional institutions) indicates the probable positive outcome for all children in the more traditional "mainline" school systems. Perhaps most important in the recommendation of this program is the remark made at the end of Chapter 10, "Books That Are Worth It", wherein James Duggins and Tom Finn report on a conversation between one of themselves and a student, "Bill." This remark, made at the end of a two-hour session,--the last half-hour of which was devoted to "free reading", is as follows:

When the half-hour was done and it was time to leave, some readers departed hurriedly while others left more reluctantly. Still absorbed in his reading, Bill completed the page or paragraph, turned down the corner, closed the book, glanced at the cover, placed the book in his bag, and started for the door. Intrigued by this thirteen-year-old second grade reader [italics], I crossed his path at the door and walked with him as I asked, 'What are you reading?' 'Jaws,' he replied. 'Is it good?' 'Yeah!' 'But isn't it hard?' 'Sure it's hard, but it's worth it!' With that, I moved back into the classroom and he moved out into the world of thirteen year olds. (Fader, p.236)

"Sure it's hard, but it's worth it" is a strong and powerful statement for a thirteen-year-old second grade level reader to make,--and particularly to make about a book as difficult "reading-level-wise" as Jaws. As the author relating this passage further points out, "To know his reading test scores and grade placement may be information important to helping him gain skills. But to know that he can and will struggle successfully through a book he wants to read is information of far greater importance" (Fader, p.236-7). I agree. And I strongly recommend the "English in Every Classroom" program to the English teacher seriously involved in the reading and/or writing instruction of mainstreamed learning disabled students, at the high school level.

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